



SPARKS OF EMUNAH

HEICHAL HAKODESH BRESLEV WEEKLY PUBLICATION

PARSHAS KI SEITZEI
9 ELUL, 5786
ISSUE #105

BASED ON THE SEFARIM OF REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLEV ZT"L
AS TAUGHT BY MOHOROSH ZT"L AND THE ROSH YESHIVA SHLIT"A

נתנדב על ידי
הרוצה בעילום שמו
לזכות זרע של קיימא

CHIZUK
FROM THE
PARSHA

CHOOSING TO FIGHT

כִּי תֵצֵא לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל אִיבֶיךָ וַיִּתֵּן ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּיָדְךָ וְשָׁבִיתָ שָׁבִי

When you will go to war against your enemy,
Hashem will deliver him into your hands and you will capture his captives.

The entire world is a battleground. The two opposing camps are good versus evil; holiness versus impurity. It's a war that every single person fights every single minute of his life. **כִּי תֵצֵא** — when a person goes out into the world, **לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל אִיבֶיךָ** — immediately, the battle with his enemy begins.

Fighting the yetzer hara is our lifelong mission — our holy war. We must always remain aware of the battle that's raging, because just like in an actual war, when a person knows that he is on the frontlines and in danger of being captured by the enemy every moment, he remains alert and on guard. Only when he is armed, armored, and ready to fight at a moment's notice, does he stand a chance against his enemy.

The same is true of our battle with the yetzer hara. We are up against a shrewd enemy who uses many different tactics to defeat us. In order to triumph over him, we must remain vigilant and be prepared to combat him at his every line of attack.

Fighting Habit

One of the yetzer hara's strategies is called "habit" — or "addiction," in more extreme terms. At times, we become so accustomed to bad behavior that we start to believe that we can no longer control our actions. But this is only an illusion. In reality, there is no such thing as a person losing his *bechira*; rather, a person always has free will. The Rebbe once said (*Likutei Moharan 2:110*), **"The concept of bechira is very simple — if one wants to do something, he does it, and if he doesn't want to do it, he doesn't."**

The seeming loss of control is just a ploy of the yetzer hara, just another way to get us to stop trying. We must remember that **וַיִּתֵּן ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּיָדְךָ** — Hashem has placed the yetzer hara in our hands. If we really want to, we can fight him and win.

Battle Secrets

The only way to overcome the yetzer hara is with *tefilla*. By continuously turning to Hashem and beseeching Him for help, we can emerge victorious. However, the yetzer hara knows that *tefilla* is the beginning of his defeat, so he places many obstacles in our path (both actual and imagined) that hold us back from talking to Hashem. Yet we must fight back! The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:26*) that a person must be persistent especially in the area which is challenging for him, because that is where his success lies. **וְשָׁבִיתָ שָׁבִי** — we must fight the yetzer hara in the very area which he wants to conquer us.

Let us strengthen ourselves to talk to Hashem constantly so that ultimately, we will win not just the battle, but also the war.

Zos Hatorah Ki Seitzei 2, Sichos Mohorosh Parshas Ki Seitzei

MOHOROSH
SPEAKS

TRY AND FAIL...

Failure. Anyone who has experienced failure on any level can tell of the overwhelming bitterness, despair, and the devastating blow it is to a person's morale.

Chazal teach us a valuable secret (*Shabbos 120*): **often, failure is actually a prerequisite for success**, since it's only through our mistakes that we learn how to better conduct ourselves in the future. Furthermore, failure can push a person to dig in his heels and try even harder, spurring him onward to eventual triumph. Messed up badly? This may be your ticket to success.

Every skilled electrician was a beginner once, vulnerable to electric shocks while attempting to navigate electrical systems. Most prominent businessmen of today have made some bad investments at the beginning of their careers, even losing thousands of dollars, until they began tasting success. The secret is to embrace the initial struggles and learn from one's mistakes, as opposed to giving up at the first signs of trouble.

Spirituality works the same way. It's a

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A PEACEFUL HOME

Dear ...,

People often think that Elul is a tense and stressful time, and that's why they can't handle it. This is a big mistake — Elul is actually a time of mercy, when Hashem's hand is outstretched to all those who do *teshuva*. Every person can rectify everything that he needs to rectify — Hashem is waiting for us to come to Him, to ask for forgiveness, and to do *teshuva*.

It All Depends on You!

Elul is a time when one can achieve *shalom bayis*. Chazal say (Yevamos 63a) "אעשה לו עזר כנגדו: זכה עוזרתו, לא זכה כנגדו" — *Shalom bayis* is dependent on the person himself.

If one's *kedushas hayesod* is lacking and he sins in *p'gam habris*, he'll lose his *shalom bayis*. "לא זכה, כנגדו" — His wife will oppose him in every area, and their home will be one of discord and strife.

However, if the person does *teshuva* and returns to Hashem, his wife's nature will be transformed for the better. "זכה, עוזרתו" — She will be a helpmate to him, and they will live in harmony.

Return. Restore.

So how can a person return to Hashem?

When a person feels regret for his sins and verbalizes them, and when he makes a firm commitment to guard his eyes and promises not to sin anymore in the future, he thus rectifies his spiritual blemishes.

Now in the month of Elul, one should increase his good deeds by establishing a *shiur kavua* in Torah learning every day, and by being meticulous to daven *shacharis*, *mincha*, and *maariv* with *minyan* each day. Additionally, he should increase his acts of *chesed* — particularly with his wife and children. This means to look for ways to **help out** instead of looking for excuses to **run out**.

The Rebbe strongly exhorted us (*Sichos Haran* 264) that we must honor our wives and have compassion for them, because they endure so much pain through childbearing and child-rearing. One must speak pleasantly to his wife, avoid arguing with her, and never distress her, *chas v'shalom*. Chazal say (*Bava Metzia* 59a) that the nature of women is that they cry more easily, and a person must be very careful not to hurt his wife's feelings, because causing one's wife to cry is a grave sin.

K'siva v'chasima tova.

Adapted from Atzaso Emunah Parshas Re'eh 5786

"profession" in which we all want to excel — we want to be

erlich, do what's right, and be successful in *avodas Hashem*, but the path is often full of setbacks and regression. If we despair and immediately give up, we'll never be able to succeed — rather, we must use our mistakes as learning opportunities, turning failures into stepping stones to our ultimate goal.

Whose Business?

The problems begin when we take others' opinions too seriously. Failure is much harder to swallow when it's accompanied by the anxiety of, "What do people think of me now? Everyone will see how incapable I am!"

The truth of the matter is most people are too busy thinking about themselves to even pay attention to others. And regarding those few people who actually may be looking, judging, and whispering about us — they're completely powerless to help or harm us. So why care about what they think? We must remain focused on ourselves — after failing, we must simply brush ourselves off and move on.

In the ninth story of the *sefer Sippurei Ma'asios*, the Rebbe tells the tale of the *chacham* (wise one) and the *tam* (simple one). The *chacham*, despite his many talents and abilities, was never happy with himself or his role. Obsessed with public opinion, he constantly looked over his shoulder to ensure that he was being held in the highest regard. Nothing and nobody was ever good enough for him, and this is what led to his eventual downfall.

The *tam*, while being of lesser talent and ability, was content with himself and unfazed by those around him. When he was compared to more successful people in the same profession as him, he responded, "What does that have to do with me? This is my business and that is their business." With that attitude governing his every act, the *tam* eventually became the head minister of all ministers, attaining the pinnacle of success.

Don't Do It Alone

It was Chaim's clumsy day. He walked out of shul balancing his tallis bag in one hand, a coffee in the other, and a shopping bag in his pinky, when he tripped on a crack in the pavement and found himself sprawled on the ground in a puddle of coffee.

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but his right leg spasmed with pain and refused to cooperate. Left with no other choice, Chaim put his ego aside and allowed a kind stranger to lend him a hand.

We try to be good, we really do. However, we sometimes lose our balance and stumble, at times falling so badly that we're incapable of getting up on our own. We need a *tzaddik* to lift us, guide us, hold our hands, and help us move on.

The Rebbe teaches that a person who has an ongoing connection to a *tzaddik* will not fall, because he constantly receives guidance on how to conduct himself and how to strengthen himself. We must plead with Hashem to guide us to the right leader — a true *tzaddik* who can help us and be our perpetual source of inspiration.

Holding Strong

Mohorosh once told the following story:

A *chassid* came to his Rebbe to unburden himself. He shamefacedly admitted that he had committed some terrible aveiros and pleaded with his Rebbe to show him a way to do teshuva.



The Rebbe listened as the man wept, but he gently responded that he was unequipped to deal with such matters. "I would advise you to seek the counsel of the Chazon Ish," he said. "He is the only one who can help you."

The man panicked. Opening up to his own Rebbe was hard enough — he couldn't fathom doing it all over again.

Nevertheless, his Rebbe did not back down. "Your situation is complex and great tikkunim are needed. You must go!"

Seeing no alternatives, the broken man went. When he entered the Chazon Ish's inner study, he was overcome with such awe and admiration that he was rendered speechless. Thoughts of remorse over his past misdeeds filled his mind and he silently vowed to do complete teshuva and return to the ways of the Torah.

The *tzaddik* began to speak, counseling, guiding, and encouraging. He advised the man to begin learning Mishna Berurah each day as a crucial part of his teshuva.

When the man left the Chazon Ish's home, he felt like a new person. In the weeks that followed, he indeed began learning Shulchan Aruch with Mishna Berurah and soon became an *erliche Yid*, thanks to the *tzaddik* who showed him a way out of the mire.

In order for failure to truly spur a person onward, one must find a *tzaddik* who can guide him on his journey. Constantly connected to someone who is greater than himself, he will be *zoche* to achieve greatness in *avodas Hashem*.

you should speak to them often about *emunah*. At the Shabbos *seudos*, speak about the greatness of living with Hashem. Relate the story of the *Ba'al Tefilla* (*Sippurei Ma'asiyos*, Story 12). Tell them how the *Ba'al Tefilla* constantly told everyone, "There's no other purpose in this world except to serve Hashem." Tell them what the *Gibbor* (warrior) said to the *Ba'al Tefilla*, "I heard from the king that a person can be extricated from all lusts, except for one who has fallen into the lust for money."

You live in Eretz Yisrael — bring your children to Yavniel and see the *shul* that Mohorosh built. Look at the words that Mohorosh had inscribed on the entrance to the *beis medrash*: The *Ba'al Tefilla* said, "**Do you still want money? Do not speak to me about money at all.**"

Every time I have the *zechus* to be in Yavniel, I visit the *shul* just to see that sign. Each time, it sparks a powerful awakening within me, seeing how Mohorosh lived with Hashem and how deeply he embraced the Rebbe's words with simplicity and sincerity.

Read this letter again and again.

Adapted from Atzaso Emunah Volume 6, Letter #513

THE ROSH YESHIVA SAYS...

When the *shofar* is blown each day, cover your face with your *tallis* and have the following in mind:

תקיעה — Hashem created man straight (Koheles 7:29);

שבירים — But we shattered this with our sins;

תרועה — The solution is to cry out to Hashem;

תקיעה — And we will become whole once more.

Q & A

I WANT TO MAKE A LOW-KEY SIMCHA, BUT MY SON REFUSES.



QUESTION:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

My oldest son is going to be bar mitzvah in a few weeks, be'ezras Hashem. Over the past two years, since my wife and I started listening to the shiurim, we've been hearing the Rosh Yeshiva say again and again that it makes no sense to spend extra money on simchos — and especially when there is no money to pay for it.

With this perspective in mind, we were planning to make just a small kiddush on Shabbos in our shul — but my son, the bar mitzvah boy, won't hear of it. No matter how many times we've tried to explain to him how much smarter it is to make a modest affair and not to fall into debt over foolishness, he refuses to understand. He's ashamed of his friends, and is afraid they'll make fun of him if he won't have a "normal" bar mitzvah in a hall like everyone else.

I'm sure that if he would receive a letter of chizuk from the Rosh Yeshiva, it would give him the strength to go through with this plan.

Thank you.

without constantly looking over their shoulders to see what their friends are doing.

When the time comes for them to celebrate their milestones — *bar mitzvah*, wedding, or other occasion — they won't demand a lavish affair just because "everyone else" does so. Rather, they'll understand their parents' financial limitations and find joy in the *simcha* itself.

It Starts with Small Things

In our Heichal Hakodesh schools and *chadarim*, we teach the children to live for themselves and not to look at others. We place a strong emphasis on this (especially with the girls) — we teach them to distinguish between "needs" and "wants," and that they don't have to get every single thing that their hearts desire.

Take the beginning of the school year, for example. **If a girl's briefcase from the previous year is still usable, there's no need to buy a new one.** Sure, she might *want* a new briefcase — every person wants new and beautiful things — but our teachers explain to the girls that a new briefcase costs money. We teach them that it's wrong to nag, sulk, or threaten that they won't go to school until they get a new briefcase — or anything else along those lines.

We're talking about small amounts of money here, but if children are brought up with these values, they'll understand this later when it's time to celebrate their *bar mitzvah* or wedding — they'll go to their *simcha* happy and content.

How To Do It?

If you are looking for advice on how to instill in your children an appreciation for modest, inexpensive *simchos*,

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THE ROSH YESHIVA'S RESPONSE:

Dear ...,

Everything depends on the *chinuch* in the home.

Children who are raised properly learn that they'll get whatever they need, not whatever they want, and they also learn to live a genuine life — to do what's right for them

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